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REMARKS

Claims 1, 3, 4 - 9, 12, 13 and 15 are in this application and are presented for consideration. By this Amendment, Applicant has canceled allowable claim 16 and presented the subject matter in revised claim 8. Some minor changes of wording have been made to improve the overall form of the resulted amended claim 8. Claim 1 has been amended including features from claims 2 and 11. It is Applicant's position that no new issues are raised as these issues are quite similar to the issues presented in allowable claim 16. Similar minor changes have been made to claim 4.

Claims 10, 12 and 14 have been rejected. The features that raise this rejection with regard to claim 12 have been canceled and claims 10 and 14 have both been canceled.

The subject matter of claim 11 represented in a clarified format with features of claim 2 (some of the inserts having leveled surfaces) are presented in revised claim 1. This presents subject matter similar to claim 16.

The claims presented include a component surface or useful surface that is made up of inserts that have a planar surface portion and the resin surface. The resin surface is provided such that there are slight depressions between surface inserts. That is, between planar insert surfaces, the resin surface rises up to the level of the insert surface at the edge of the inserts with this resin surface from depression to the level of the planar inserts being graduated and free from steps, nosings or irregularities. With the structure of allowable claim 8, as well as the structure of claims 1 and 4, surfaces for wall coverings, tables or kitchen surfaces or even indoor floors or bathroom surfaces are provided which are readily cleanable and without nooks,

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crannies or nosings which are prevalent in prior art structures.

Claims 10 and 11 have been rejected as being obvious based on Sharif.

Claims 1 - 10 and 12 - 15 have been rejected as being anticipate by JP-A 07100816.

Both Sharif and JP-A 07100816 fail to teach and fail to suggest the combination of features claimed. The features which define over the art as noted by the Examiner, namely providing the resin at the highest point of the coplanar surfaces at the edge of the inserts and having depressions and being graduated and free from steps or irregularities from the depression to the highest level is not suggested by the prior art.

Sharif provides inserts 2 having two opposite facings before putting them into the resin. As such, the inserts are anchored in the resin 4 but only around the periphery of the inserts 2. This results in an extremely weak structure of the tile.

The invention provides for the inserts 13 embedded into the resin. As such, some of the inserts are fully surrounded by the resin with some forming part of the surface but only at the flattened area I.

The inserts 2 of Sharif are extensively protruding from the surface of the resin 4, as the resin is poured into the mold up to a far lower level than the thickness of the insert 2. This entails a slow and difficult working process with sharp nosings, nooks, crannies and the like between the periphery of the insert 2 and the surface of the resin 4. This is significantly problematic with regard to cleaning. As such, this does not achieve the results of the present invention, namely avoiding the prior art problems of cleaning with dirt receiving nooks, crannies and nosings. The structure of the application does not have the nosings between the inserts and

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the resin and there is no region where dirt gathers around the inserts.

Applicant has commented on JP 07100816 and acknowledges the Examiner's comments with regard to the previous arguments. Applicant has clarified combined claims 1, 2 and 11. Not only does the edge of the resin meet the edge of the inserts but it meets such edge at a level of the planar surface.

JP 07100816 has the purpose and aim of avoiding a slippery surface and provides neat corners and sharp steps between inserts and the resin. JP 07100816 proposes a product that most likely does not result in a slippery surface and prevents such. However this product tends to retain dirt that cannot be easily removed. As such JP 07100816 relates substantially to floors or other surfaces where slipping is an issue.

The primary aspect of the structure of the present invention is not to avoid slippery surfaces. Instead, surfaces are obtained for wall, table, kitchen and even floor coverings or similar coverings that are not necessarily slippery but which are readily cleanable and do not have nooks, crannies or the like which are problematic as to cleaning. As such, the claimed structure presents a different approach to the technological domain and has a different purpose from that proposed by JP 07100816. As such, JP 07100816 does not suggest the combination of features claimed.

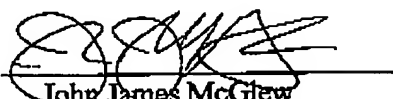
The Examiner is respectfully requested to favorably consider the claims as now presented. Should the Examiner determine that any issues remain as to claim language, the Examiner is requested to telephone Applicant's attorney such that claim language issues may

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be addressed at an early time.

Respectfully submitted  
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Enclosed: Petition for One Month Extension of Time

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